

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

✓ EXTENSION SERVICE

Washington 25, D. C.

May 28, 1947

For your information

TO STATE FARM LABOR SUPERVISORS OF Fla., Ga., S.C., N.C., Va., Md., Del., Pa.,
N.J., N.Y., Conn., Tenn., and Ohio

Subject: Atlantic Coast Migratory Movement

MORE MIGRANTS LEAVING FLORIDA

While the number of workers passing out of Florida through information stations is still far below that of last year, it is apparent that many are leaving and either do not check through information stations or are by-passing the regular routes. Through May 22 only 1,741 workers have passed through the Gross, Florida information station as compared to 5,270 on the same date in 1946. This does not mean that there will be fewer migrants available this year, but merely reflects the delayed season and repeated warning not to leave Florida until jobs are available. H. S. McLendon says it is apparent workers are leaving Florida. Some of them have gone for short visits to their homes in Alabama and southwestern Georgia before heading north. But many crew leaders have been influenced by advice to hold crews in Florida until work is available in other States. From now on the movement can be expected to increase rapidly. Due to unfavorable weather, many workers have not had regular work. They are without funds and have reached the point that anywhere else looks better than where they are. Every effort should be continued to persuade workers not to move north into areas where there are neither jobs nor housing available now.

SOUTH CAROLINA reports that bean picking is under full swing. If the market holds up next week, we will see the peak of employment for bean pickers. Potato harvest has started. All camps are filled to capacity with workers. Farm housing is filling up but so far the Extension Service has been able to find housing for all workers that have applied. W. L. Brannon asks that Florida placement men having crews to place should have crew leaders call South Carolina county agents rather than his office. Crews are advised not to come to South Carolina unless they have made arrangements with employers for jobs and housing.

MARYLAND has enough workers already in camps, or coming in this week, to take care of all requirements for strawberry pickers through the season, which will end about June 6. Three camps are open - Allen, 31 workers; Somerset, 100 workers; Pocomoke, 150 workers in and 175 more expected this week. Camp Somerset should eventually become an important information and distribution center for the entire Eastern Shore. It is conveniently located and will accommodate at least 500 workers. Remodeling is still in process and no more workers can be received in Camp Somerset until June 15. Bean picking will start about June 20. More frost-damaged bean fields have been replanted than was predicted two weeks ago, but some bean acreage has been replanted to tomatoes. Bill Hillman reports some success in finding interim jobs for workers for the two-week gap between the end of strawberry picking and the beginning of the bean harvest. No more workers are needed at present. Conditions in Worcester County indicate one of the heaviest potato yields on record. Normally potato digging starts about July 1, but may be a little later this year.

NEW JERSEY conditions reflect unfavorable weather resulting in delay in planting crops and early harvest of asparagus, strawberries, and early beans. Asparagus cutting is now well under way. Processor's price and prevailing harvest wages are both lower than a year ago. Plenty of labor is available to cut the crop. Some beans and tomatoes have had to be replanted because of frost damage. Bean picking will probably not start before June 20. Some migrant workers have moved in and have been employed. There will be no further demand for additional workers before bean picking starts. Crews should not plan to come to New Jersey now unless they have completed definite arrangements with employers for jobs and housing. Federal farm labor camps at Burlington, Swedesboro, and Bridgeton have been declared surplus by the Labor Branch and steps are being taken for their liquidation. However, they probably will not be dismantled during the 1947 season and should be available for emergency use to house migrant labor.

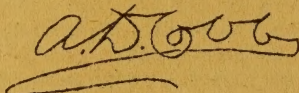
DELAWARE, according to Frank Gordy, has a supply and demand for migrant workers just about equal. Plenty of pickers are available to harvest strawberries with the crop only 25 to 30 percent of normal. Canning peas will be ready for harvest about June 5. The crop is poor, running from 20 to 50 percent of normal. Migrants do not ordinarily like to work at pea harvesting, but Gordy can place some migrants on this job. Snap beans are about 2 weeks late and will not be ready for harvest before July 10. Staytonville Camp is open. Other camps will not be opened until more labor is actually needed. A few migrants are coming in, and in most cases are returning under contract to former employers. Gordy advises crews not to come to Delaware before making definite arrangements with employers for work and housing.

NORTH CAROLINA reports little change from last week. A few crews have come in under previous agreement with their employer, and on dates specified. Potato digging is starting and will be at the peak about June 9. Crews for this work have been previously contacted and know when to come and where to go, and that housing will be available. Little or no additional labor can be used.

VIRGINIA has plenty of workers to finish picking strawberries. No more workers needed before bean picking which should start about June 10. Carl Arvin is the new farm labor assistant at the Accomac County Farm Labor Office. Phone 198-J, Onancock, Va.

"Pitt" Heads South - While C. W. E. Pittman is on a field trip through his southeastern territory, we find ourselves in his shoes with plenty of room to spare. But if you will send us the facts on Monday, we'll get out the news.

Very truly yours,



A. D. Cobb
Northeastern Area Director
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